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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
INFORMATION REPORT

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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This report was prepared by a Department of the Army interrogator in partial response to Soviet Standard Brief No. 7.

Dependents

1. It was source's belief that only officers were permitted to bring their families to East Germany. He thought that there were no limitations set upon the number or rank of officers that could send for their dependents.
2. Officers' dependents began to arrive in East Germany about January 1954. Source later saw dependents living in the 10th Gd. Bn. caserne area. The homes were originally German property and used exclusively as Soviet dependent housing with two or three families occupying one building.
3. Many of the officers had children of school age. Source saw Soviet children up to 13 or 14 years of age but no older. These children attended school somewhere in Berlin, but a new school in Potsdam was scheduled to open in fall 1954. Source thought that classes one through seven were conducted at the Berlin school.
4. Source did not know what the exact policy was for the dependents of sverkhstrochniki (career NCOs) in East Germany. He said, however, that one sverkhstrochnik in his company asked the company commander to approve his request for his family to be brought to East Germany but that the request was turned down. Source never heard of any reasons given to explain why Soviet dependents of EM and sverkhstrochniki were not permitted to come to Germany.

Pass and Leave Policies

5. Officers were permitted to leave the caserne area during off-duty hours and go to town but, in all cases, they had to return to the caserne by 2400 hours. Source thought that not more than 30% of the officers could be away from the caserne at any one time.

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6. Career NCOs had the privilege of leaving the post after duty hours during the week, as did the officers. Both officers and career NCOs were required to sign out with the OD and sign in upon their return. Career NCOs also had to return to the caserne by 2400 hours. They had a written pass given to them by the OD which stated the hour of return.
7. Conscripted EM could leave the post only on Saturdays and Sundays with permission of the company CO. They were only permitted to leave the caserne area in groups of three to four. The senior man in the group was put in charge and was held responsible for the actions of the men while they were away from the caserne. This fact was noted by the OD on the senior man's pass. On Saturdays, EM were allowed to leave at about 1400 hours or when the day's training schedule was completed, whichever occurred later. Sundays, they were able to leave at 1000 hours. Normally, on both days EM had to return to the caserne by 1600 hours but, occasionally and with permission of the CO, they could stay out as late as sundown but never later. EM had to sign out with the OD and sign in upon their return. Source believed that not more than 30% of the EM could be away on pass at any one time.
8. While source was with the 10th Sep. Gd. Bn., the policy for passes and curfew hours was quite lax and, frequently, EM signed in late from pass. Often, the OD signed in men who came in late as having returned before curfew. Occasionally, an OD signed in men after curfew and gave the exact time of their return. It was the duty of the company CO to check the sign-out sheet the following morning. Men who were signed in past the curfew hour were called in and given a verbal reprimand. Source did not know of any cases where a man was court-martialed for returning late to the caserne.
9. Officers and career EM were authorized 45 days leave each year; conscripted EM were not authorized any leave at all during their period of service except, in rare cases, for compassionate reasons or meritorious service. Travel time was not counted against leave time and train transportation was free for all personnel on leave. Conscripted EM were paid nine rubles a day for rations while on leave. Enroute to their destination, all EM received rations. Source did not know any of the policies which affected the officers' leaves.
10. Source was told by Sgt. SEMISHEM (fnu), a career NCO in the Motor Trans. Plat., that he had spent a leave in East Germany during the early part of 1953. Source had no further information.
11. Source did not know what percentage of officers and EM were allowed leave from the unit at any one time. Compassionate leave was granted to a conscript EM in source's company for 10 or 15 days because the EM's mother was ill, but this was the only case of compassionate leave of which source knew. One conscripted EM in source's unit was granted a 15-day leave for being a superior soldier; source described him as extremely conscientious in his work and diligent. Leaves for compassionate reasons and meritorious service were granted by the battalion CO. Conscripts complained continuously that they were not granted leaves except in extremely rare cases (mentioned above). Source heard no complaints among the officers or career NCOs concerning leaves.

#### State of Discipline

12. Source could not give any specific instances of good or bad discipline. Most conscripts were resigned to the fact that they had to serve their three-year period and were indifferent to any routine

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disciplinary actions taken against them. When source was with the 10th Sep. Gd. Bn., Capt. REZHANKOV (fnu), Bn. Chief of Staff who acted as Bn. CO from July to August 1953, was noted for keeping the guardhouse well-occupied. He even gave EM five days in the guardhouse if they were caught with their pockets unbuttoned. The guardhouse, a separate battalion installation, had a capacity of 10 men, but, when there was not enough room there, EM were taken to the main prison compound.<sup>2</sup> At the time of source's defection, the Bn. CO, Lt. Col. SUKHANOV (fnu), who arrived in September 1953, was more lenient and rarely put EM in the guardhouse. When source defected in June 1954, there were no soldiers in the guardhouse.

#### Prevalence of Drunkennes

13. Drinking was prevalent when spirits were available. Because the pay of a private amounted to 30 East Marks per month, liquor could not be purchased in great quantities; however, source was certain that if more money had been available to the conscripted Soviet soldiers in East Germany, more liquor would have been bought. One-half liter of a Soviet-brand whiskey could be purchased for EM 7.50 and one-half liter of a German-brand whiskey for EM 8.50. Most of the career NCOs and officers drank heavily. Legally, liquor was sold to officers and sverkhstrochniki only at the post store; there was no limit to the quantity of liquor that could be purchased by an officer or a sverkhstrochnik there. Occasionally, the employees in the store sold liquor to an obligatory-tour EM when no one was around, but this practice was illegal because EM were forbidden to buy liquor either off or on post. Very often, a sverkhstrochnik made liquor purchases for the EM, and the practice of selling liquor through the caserne wire fence was quite prevalent. German nationals brought liquor to the fences and sold it to the Soviet soldiers. These transactions were carried out during both day and night by German adults and children and source did not remember anyone being penalized for such action. The only action taken by the guards was to chase the Germans away from the fence. Source did not know if there were any regulations which stated that a sverkhstrochnik could legally keep liquor in his quarters, but he had had liquor in his room and was never reprimanded.

#### Venereal Diseases

14. Source never heard of any Soviet Army personnel with venereal diseases.

#### Punishment for Disobedience of Orders

15. Many soldiers did not carry out the orders given by an officer and the officers seldom took any action against this. Usually, an officer reprimanded a soldier verbally and, occasionally, put him in the guardhouse for a day or two, but these were for minor cases of insubordination. To be put in the guardhouse did not upset the soldiers because they were then able to miss training, especially the political training, which they intensely disliked. Source could not give any specific instances of punishment meted out to EM because nothing serious had been done to offenders in his units at any time during his service in the Soviet Army. He also had no knowledge of recent orders from higher headquarters calling attention to these breaches of discipline. Several men had been transferred from the auto platoon, however, and were sent to the other companies in the battalion but source did not know for what reason.

#### Causes of Low Morale

16. There were many factors described by source as contributing to the low state of morale in his last company. Foremost was the policy of

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no leaves for obligatory-tour EM and this was always a topic of discussion among the 90% of the men who fell into this category in source's unit. Various other privileges, extended to officers and career EM, were also resented and contributed to low morale among the rest of the troops. These included the fact that officers and career EM were able to buy liquor and drink publicly, were able to leave the caserne after duty hours, and that officers were allowed to have their families with them.

17. Source cited a specific example of the way his own company's morale was adversely affected by callous official action: Source's company returned from the firing range with a very high average and the men were well-pleased with their performance. The Bn. CO, however, decided that the scores were too high in view of the unit's previous low scores and insisted that the company fire again. Learning that they had to fire again, the men became disgusted. The new company average was low because the men were not interested in obtaining good scores but the results seemed to satisfy the Bn. CO.
18. Drivers of vehicles in the motor platoon made minor repairs on their vehicles in their free time in the evenings. They worked late into the night and never received any time off during the day. This policy of no compensation brought about a great lack of interest in vehicle-maintenance.

#### Food and Recreational Facilities

19. Recreational facilities were limited to movies within the caserne which were shown to the EM free of charge. Within source's company, movies were available twice a week, on Saturday and Sunday. Movies were shown twice a week for the entire battalion but during the week. If a soldier desired and had the free time, he could attend four movies a week.
20. Food was generally poor but it did not seem to be a major factor contributing to low morale. The men accepted the fact that food was bad and that nothing could be done about it. One of source's duties, as battalion supply and clothing clerk, was to issue rations for the mess daily. On one occasion, he was ordered to issue some spoiled herring and crackers that had been kept in the battalion warehouse.

#### Promotion Policies

21. Promotions for EM to the rank of private first class were granted by the Bn. CO. All other promotions for EM were made by a higher headquarters (unknown to source) through the Bn. CO. Promotions did not seem to interest conscripted EM and the idea of self-improvement was rarely a motivating factor. In source's battalion, there was a soldier who was promoted from private to master sergeant within one year.
22. Promotions for career NCOs to the rank of sergeant were made by the Chief of Counterintelligence Administration in Potsdam. Source did not know who was responsible for promotions to ranks above sergeant and knew nothing about officer promotion policies or complaints that officers may have had against it.

#### Return to the USSR Before End of Tour

23. Source did not commit himself as to the number of EM and officers who had been returned to the USSR for political unreliability, court-martial sentences, physical disability, etc., before the expiration of their normal tour of duty; however, he stated that there were some such cases.<sup>3</sup> The fate of deserters who arrived in the West was never a topic of discussion within source's unit and this topic was never

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brought up by the political officer or mentioned in any conversations. In source's opinion, however, the reason for avoiding the topic was to keep the EM from thinking about desertion. If the men knew that other soldiers had defected and had been told about it by their officers, possibly more would have channeled their thoughts in that direction. Because few could be trusted, free discussion of the opportunities and advantages in the West was limited.

24. While source was stationed in East Germany, he had the occasion to listen to Voice of America and Co-ordination Center for Anti-Bolshevik Struggle but did not remember that these broadcasts mentioned the fate of deserters who arrived in the West.

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1. [redacted] Enclosure A, for the location and description of various buildings used as dependents' quarters in the caserne area.
- 50X1 2. [redacted] Comment: The guarding of the main prison compound was the principal mission of the 10th Sep. Gd. Bn.
- 50X1 3. [redacted] paragraphs 17-26, for details of EM and officers returned to the USSR before the completion of their normal tour of duty.

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